



THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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American Embassy, SHAPE/L,
Paris, France,
April 20, 1959.

Downgraded To: ~~SECRET~~ ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
LEO 11652: XGDS ① 2 ③ 4
Authorized By: H. D. Browster
August 4, 1975

Dear Foy:

One of the first matters taken up with me by Larry Norstad upon my return to SHAPE was some of the problems he had been encountering in getting the tripartite military planning effort for Berlin contingency underway. As you know, the proposal for such an effort under Norstad's general supervision had been under consideration in one way or another since last December and was given explicit approval in the Tripartite Meeting of Foreign Ministers in Washington early this month. However, the French and British military authorities have tended to approach this project with a certain amount of caution; this has been particularly true of the British. The British Chiefs of Staff expressed some concern to General Norstad through their military channels here about the matter of proper military and political guidance to the planning group. Given Anglo-American differences over Berlin tactics, this is not a surprising attitude. The diffidence of the French has been of another and less significant kind. They have merely stated that they are participating in this planning enterprise on the basis of "coordination" and not "integration". This is a standard French bow these days towards the dogma of General de Gaulle and is not expected to have any adverse effect on this particular operation.

In order to clear the atmosphere, Norstad prepared on April 14 the attached memorandum giving his idea of the terms of reference for the LIVE OAK planning staff, called in Sir Richard Gale and Admiral Barjot and, having heard that the British and French military saw no objection to this piece of paper, thereupon sent it to General Palmer for his information

and that of

The Honorable
Foy D. Kohler,
Deputy Assistant Secretary for
European Affairs,
Department of State,
Washington.

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and that of the British and French officers on the planning staff. This memorandum may therefore be said to represent an informally-agreed charter for the Berlin contingency military planning effort.

As you know, George West has been designated the State Department point of contact with the LIVE OAK project, and most of the reporting on this subject --- informal and formal --- will be George's responsibility. However, because of the overall supervisory role of Norstad in this affair, there may be occasions when I can be useful in a reporting or liaison capacity.

Sincerely,



Raymond E. Thurston

Enclosure:

SACEUR Memo 4/14/59

cc: W. Barbour, London
W. Tyler, Bonn
C. Lyon, Paris
G. West, EUCOM/L

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14 April 1959

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: LIVE OAK Planning Staff

1. On 17 March 1959 SACEUR/US CINCEUR recommended to the United States Chiefs of Staff the establishment of a tripartite staff or planning group to plan such military measures as might be required as a result of the present Berlin crisis. This recommendation assumed that this planning staff could furnish advice on matters within its cognizance, but that military guidance of a major policy nature would be provided to the Governments by appropriate national military authorities.

2. SACEUR/US CINCEUR suggested that this planning staff, code name LIVE OAK, should be under his direction since, in that way, it would be possible to bridge the gap between the national and tripartite planning on the one side, and the NATO planning on the other. It was also for this reason that it was considered desirable to locate the staff in the Paris area, where space and administrative facilities have now been made available at Camp des Loges. Because of the operational nature of the planning involved and the urgency of the requirement for such planning, the LIVE OAK group will be organized as a military staff, made up of appropriate representation from each of the three countries concerned and, in addition, liaison will be established with the German Federal Republic. It is desired that close contact be maintained with the field commands and, to this end, appropriate Army and Air Force commanders in Germany will be asked to make representatives available. It is, of course, essential that political guidance be available to the LIVE OAK staff. It is hoped that guidance of this type can be made available to the staff as a whole, but the senior officers may be used as national representatives for this purpose, if desired. The source of political advice is, of course, to be determined by the countries concerned. These proposals, all of which were contained in the original recommendation of March 17, 1959, are hereby reaffirmed.

3. The LIVE OAK Planning Staff will operate under the direct supervision of Deputy US CINCEUR, General Palmer. The immediate directors of staff activity will be a Major General of the British Forces and a Brigadier General of the French Forces, who may also serve as national representatives, if so desired by their Governments.

LAURIS NORSTAD
General USAF

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